

REMARKS

Claims 13, 14, 16-19, 21, 33 and 40 have been amended. Claims 45-49 have been added. Claims 1-12, 15, 39 and 41-44 have been canceled. Claims 23, 25-32 and 35-38 have been withdrawn as being directed to a non-elected invention. Claims 13, 14, 16-38, 40 and 45-49 are currently pending in this application. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original and other claims in this and other applications. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in light of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Applicants note that withdrawn claim 23 depends from claim 13, 14, 21 or 22 and therefore requires all of the limitations of the independent claims. Applicants respectfully submit that upon allowance of any of independent claims 13, 14, 21, or 22, the withdrawn dependent claim should be rejoined and fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.104. See also, MPEP § 821.04(a).

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of claims 21, 22 and 34 and the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 15-19 and 40.

Claim 21 is objected to for informalities. Claim 21 has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion and as such Applicants respectfully submit that claim 21 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 9 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Bolle et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6, 301,440) ("Bolle"). Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bolle in view of Yamada et al. (U.S. App. Pub. 2001/0036298) ("Yamada"). Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bolle in view of Ray et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,940,545) ("Ray"). Each of these claims has been canceled and accordingly these rejections are moot.

Claims 13, 14, 33 and 39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bolle in view of Sannoh et al. (U.S. App. Pub. 2003/00717708) (“Sannoh”). This rejection is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 39 has been canceled; therefore the rejection as to this claim is moot.

Claims 13, 14 and 33 have been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 15. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 13, 14 and 33 are in condition for allowance and request that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Claim 24 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bolle in view of Sannoh and further in view of Ray. This rejection is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 24 depends from claim 13, 14, 21 or 22, each of which is now contains allowable subject matter. Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 24 be withdrawn and the claim allowed.

Claims 15-19 and 40 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claim 15 has been canceled and incorporated into each of claims 13 and 14. Claim 40 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 1 and new claim 45 combines claims 2 and 40. Claims 16-19 have been amended to depend from claim 13 or 14. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 16-19, 40 and new claim 45 are in condition for allowance.

New claims 46-49 contain allowable subject matter similar to claims 14, 21, 22 and 45, respectively, and as such Applicants submit that claims 45-49 be allowed.

In view of the above, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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